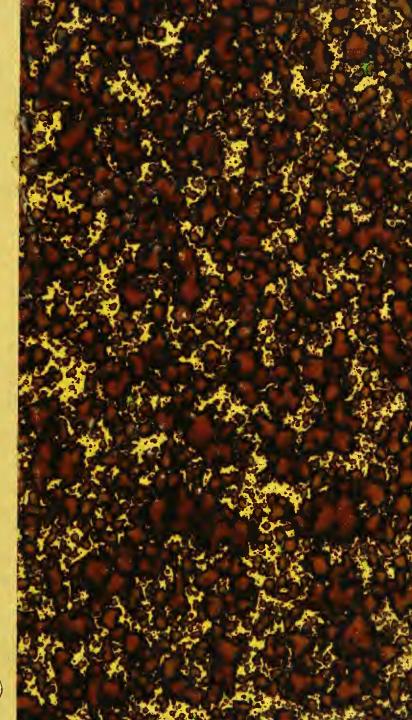
F3 1734 G195 B3





CORNELL UNIVERSITY LIBRARY



FROM

Wrs.O.G. Guerlac

Cornell University Library PS 1734.G195B3

Ballads of Harvard and other verses /

3 1924 021 968 163

olin



The original of this book is in the Cornell University Library.

There are no known copyright restrictions in the United States on the use of the text.

BALLADS OF HARVARD

AND

OTHER VERSES

BY

LLOYD McKIM GARRISON



Ce livre est toute ma jeunesse; Je l'ai fait sans presque y songer. Il y paraît, je le confesse, Et j'aurais pu le corriger.

Mais, quand l'homme change sans cesse, Au Passé pourquoi rien changer?" A. De Musset. TO
MY FATHER,
MY SEVEREST CRITIC
AND
KINDEST PATRON.
A 661930

Copyright, 1891.

By Lloyd McKim Gorrison.

W. H. Wheeler, Printer.

PREFACE.

This little collection contains a perhaps overgenerous selection from the seven years' productions of an over-active pen: but the motto of my title-page will show that I regard my verses from no mistaken standpoint as to their value, and I print them to be read (in the same spirit) by those who were in Harvard when they were written, and to whom they will suggest, I hope, some of the old spirit of the time and the place. Most of them originally appeared in the Lampoon and Advocate; and my thanks are due to the present editors of those papers for the permission to make this reprint, as well as to the editors of the Century and Scribner's Magazines for like courtesies.

L. McK. G.

Cambridge, April 6, 1891.

BALLADS OF HARVARD.

HOLWORTHY HALL.

"Persicos odi, puer, apparatus."

'Tis scarce, say my friends, my most notable card,
This odd little room at the top of the Yard,
With its windows so tiny, its bedrooms so cold,
Its ceilings so low and its panels so old.
"How much wiser," they argue, "to bend your stiff neck
To Fashion's gilt yoke, to be ruled by her Beck,
And to idle, at elegant leisure, her thrall,
Than to live with tradition in Holworthy Hall.

They tell me of parlors in walnut and oak;
Of deep-cushioned divans to lie on and smoke;
Silk curtains to screen both your windows and bed;
Thick carpets to smother the sound of your tread;
French clocks, which ring out a melodious chime
More to tickle your hearing than tell you the time;
And liveried cockneys to come at your call:
"Oh 'tis long out of style, poor old Holworthy Hall."

They tempt me with sideboards, where glow, as you pass,

Rare golden liqueurs through Bohemian glass;
With mirrors and etchings; old missals, in Latin
Which one never can read; easy chairs to get fat in;
Warm baths for the winter; in summer, cool showers
For your poor, giddy head; and a garden of flowers
Hung outside of your window to bloom on the wall;—
"And you've not even ivy on Holworthy Hall!"

O Vanity! Fashion! Not one of them knows How—as a dull Elzevir clasped on a rose (Hid there long ago, and forgot, by her lover, For a passionless bibliophile to discover) Still keeps it as fragrant as when, on the stair, With a blush, Gabrielle drew it out from her hair For the brave young Lauzun, at the Trianon Ball—The perfume of Time clings to Holworthy Hall.

Here in secret grew many a desperate plan;
Here the Med. Fac. conspired, the Pudding began;
Here the windows reflected the first fire kindled
In triumph o'er Yale. (Eheu! how we've dwindled,
Degenerate race!) Here, where often before
Had American Presidents entered the door,
The heir to the crown they defied made his call,
And left us his picture for Holworthy Hall.

Here many a "Spread" on a Class-Day has been;
'Neath these windows they danced Minuets on the Green;
Here love has been spoken, hearts broken, troth plighted,
True loves kissed or fates missed, ere the lanterns were lighted;

Here for hours have sat silent pairs, clasping fingers, Till the stars and the fairy-like lamps and the singers And the cool of the night and the elm-trees and all, Had made Heaven out of Harvard and Holworthy Hall.

Here dreamed (noble dreams!) in this old windowseat,

Harvard's poet, or paced with excitable feet
The bare, foot-worn floor, while the measure and rhyme
Kept tune with his stride. Here, in Washington's time,
Lived a patriot student to give up his bed
To a patriot soldier. Here he, too, was bred,
Who died "with his niggers" on Wagner's red wall—
The fair student soldier—in Holworthy Hall.

No, my elegant friends, yours is no Harvard fashion—This snubbing all youth and repressing all passion.

Go; look at Memorial's walls! Do you think

They lived as you live?—You, who daintily shrink

From work, like the Sybarite fretting each minute

That your bed's got a half-dozen rose-petals in it?

Nay, believe me the day will behold Harvard's fall

That finds her too proud to love Holworthy Hall!

[Lampoon, xvii, 1. 1889.]

A BALLADE OF THE HOLLY-TREE INN.

QUEER little place, with an air
Of once having been better bred:
Walls look a bit worse for wear;
Ceiling's cracked over your head;
Gone are the white linen spread
And napkins that once must have been;
Tables wear oil-cloth instead,
Now, at the Holly-Tree Inn.

But, so long as our coffee's "first-class,"

Want of linen sha'n't make us rebel;

And John, with his shirt-sleeves, may pass,

If he'll poach us our eggs just as well;

We'll pardon the dirt and the smell

If the toast be well-buttered and thin:

For nobody cares to be "swell"

When he goes to the Holly-Tree Inn.

Its guests, though, are wholly genteel.

They drop in a bit after nine,

Read the papers (and curse them with zeal),

Declare the Assembly was "fine";

They would settle the fate of the Nine,

But the ten-o'clock bell must break in,

And "The Cause of Commercial Decline"

Calls them forth from the Holly-Tree Inn.

ENVOY.

As you see, Sirs, no model of grace,
But marvellous cosy within;
And we Harvard men, born to the place,
All swear by our *Holly-Tree Inn*.

[Lampoon, xvii, 6. 1889.]

PARK'S.

- A cool, low-ceilinged room, just out of ear Of the street's riot,
- Where one may sit over his mug of beer And think, in quiet;
- Or read the latest *Punch* while dinner waits, And (without paying)
- Hear the new waltz, above the noise of plates, Some street-band's playing,—
- There's where I love on long, dull days to come, If melancholy,
- And to grow young in fond converse with some Companion jolly:
- To march in retrospect through devious ways In torch-lit column;
- To wake again around a bonfire's blaze The echoes solemn;

10

Again to join the little whispering knots
Of anxious faces,

Debating how a freshman's fate allots His first class-races;

Again to cheer the winning run—the goal First scored on Yale;

Rising new-born from this Medea's bowl Of cool brown ale.

Here, while about us politicians roar In angry clamor,

Forgetting (in the heated press of war)
Themselves and—grammar;

While actors—like the envious Casca—tear Some greater brother;

Or wild musicians, with long, unkempt hair, Rend one another,

We sit unmoved and let the world pass by, In this, our tavern,

Bidding the sorrows of the Present fly Back to their cavern.

Then, clad in all the bravest robes from old Past's Argosy,

We know the Future's Sun floods with his gold An unstirred sea!

[Lampoon, xvii, 7. 1889.]

THE TORCHLIGHT PROCESSION.

- WE swarmed that night up Beacon Hill by hundreds, just as when
- The torch was lit there long ago to call the minute-men.
- A long, thin line of yellow light danced zigzag down the street,
- And drum-taps sounded left and right with jar of tramping feet,
- And squads of men in soldier-step wheeled past with glint and shine,
- While mounted aids with gay cockades were forming us in line.
- At last they ranged us, with a band behind and one before,
- And down the hill we went again to cannons' crash and roar.
- The streets were black with faces, and we passed, as in a dream,
 - Through a furrowed human channel, in an endless human stream.
- The windows all were lighted and the girls were dressed in white,
- And their laughter sounded sweet above the tumult of the night;
- They waved and kissed their hands to us as we went flashing by,
- And we waved them back, and cheered them till our throats grew hot and dry.

- Our uniforms, fantastic robes of more fantastic hue,
- Set off by opera-hats whose fashion dated back to '42,
- At first seemed very bright and fresh, but torches will keep dripping,
- And cotton seams in dollar coats can *not* be kept from ripping,
- And "muckers" will throw stones, and stones will spoil the sleekest hat,
- (Or, if they don't, some jester with his torch will do for that),
- So when we reached the Back-Bay streets by endless countermarching,
- We looked like wilted linen very much in need of starching.
- The Freshmen carried bottles of "milk punch" they told the curious—
- And though the "punch" was doubtful, the "milk" did make them furious;
- So they knocked spectators' hats in, or their own, impartially,
- And with their sooty fingers smouched each face in reach, with glee,
- And snatched for shop-girls' handkerchiefs, and scared old maids hysteric,
- And thought such deeds, apparently, bold, daring, and Homeric.
- We Seniors were above all that and marched quite dignified:

- But marching would have been more fun had we forgot our pride;
- For just to walk and stop and cheer and rest and walk again,
- Through miles and miles and miles of streets, and lines and lines of men,
- Grows tame at last, and Bengal-lights and Romancandles pall,
- And one becomes too tired to dodge the rocket-sticks that fall.
- We marched from eight o'clock till twelve, and, as the cars were packed,
- We had to tramp to Cambridge (where our corps was bivouacked).
- We vowed we'd had a rare old time; but both my feet were sore,
- And I was daubed with soot and oil like any blackamoor;
- Half-dead I crawled into my bed, and dreamed with vividness
- (All night and half the next fair day as near as I can guess)
- I was a mule who turned the tread-mill of a cider-press!

[Lampoon, xvii, 8. 1889.]

BANISHED.

(Addressed to a Dear Friend in Temporary Enforced Retirement in a Suburban Nook: ad Kal. Mart.)

"Banished from Rome? What's banished but set free?"-

CATILINE.

DEAR TOM:—And so the Faculty Has sentenced you by stern decree To pass the springtime in duress-A hermit in the wilderness. Too bad! Too bad! Yet not all bad, 'Tis worse on us than you, egad! Our days will be in longing spent; Yours, in continual merriment. For us, foul streets and snows and mud, For you, trees bursting into bud; For us, the midnight oil and so forth, For you, the boat-house, whence you row forth For midnight wanderings on the lake, While heads in Cambridge throb and ache; For us, the city-ruined Spring, For you, the soft winds murmuring Over green meadows stuck with daisies: For us, the recitation's mazes, For you, the sound of hoof-beats ringing Through shady lanes where birds are singing; For us, a scorching sun, which burns Rather than warms, for you, dark ferns, And cooling brooks, and banks of moss On which your wearied limbs to toss.

Don't mind the pretended punishment—
The stupid Faculty but meant
To show how far their power went
By slaughtering the innocent:
But all their wiles are set at naught,
If banished Tommy, as he ought,
Riot in the exile they have ordered,
And call it virtue well-rewarded.
Spite them, my Tom, and laugh! Hang sorrow!
We'd join you, if we could, to-morrow.

[Advocate, xliii, 8. 1887.]

LOVE AND THE LAW.

"It is of the very nature and essence of fraud to elude all laws, and violate them in fact, without appearing to break them in form."—II, Parsons on Contracts, 769.

With patient eye again I trace
Back to the last-remembered place:
For thoughts have wandered, and I've read
A love-tale this half-hour, instead
Of what must some day bring me bread.

Heigho! The more I strive to learn How entry and ejectment turn, The more my unwilling mind is bent On messuage and tenement And copyholds and tithes and rent,

The plainer from each page I see
My Lady smiling out at me—
A face clear-cut as one that Greece
Would stamp upon a silver-piece,
Its gray eyes mocking at my peace!

O Love, thou Cozener! who hast bound Me to this Sisyphean round,
How shall I ever wring from thee
My bitter contract's promised fee,
If thus thou spoil my work for me?

[Lampoon, xviii. 9. 1890.]

A CLASS-DAY FANTASIE.

AROUND THE YARD.

Tempo di Marcia: andante.

Under the leafy roof, through the solemn aisles of the elm-trees,

Pensive and silent as they, our column circles the Yard:

Past University's steps, with the youngsters—God bless them!—all cheering;

On, past Holworthy's dear, simple, serene old walls; On, past the time-worn bricks of gabled Stoughton and Hollis;

- Past Harvard's fateful bell, for us forevermore dumb;
- · · Past Massachusetts and Weld. "Ah, brother, these were our temples.
 - Where shall we find such others?" "Brother, never again."
 - "Brother, we came here as boys, light-hearted, fearless, and trustful;
 - Here we first tasted life and breathed the ether of truth;
 - Here were our best hopes born; here grew our highest ideals
 - Out of these old red walls and immemorial trees;
 - And here was triumph or mourning, as their personified spirit
 - Swept o'er victorious fields or languished with drooping wings.
 - We are that spirit's children. Shall we ever forget her, brother?
 - Forget her dazzling helm and the word she bears on her shield?
 - Forget our Pallas Athéné?"—"Why dost thou ask, my brother?
 - She was the breath of our life: how should we ever forget?"

IN THE CHAPEL.

Adagio.

- "Ye came like water and like wind ye go."

 So spake the preacher. "Only yesterday

 In the cool grass beneath blue skies ye lay:

 To-morrow morning brings the storm and snow.
 - "Ye who but now chased pleasure with hot breath
 Must forth to battle with a world uncouth,—
 Hope's endless days are done. Lo! in your youth
 Ye have lived out a life and died a death.
- "' 'Ye came like water.' Has this meadow been
 Impoverished by your river's bitterness?

 Or have ye, with a lingering, sweet caress,
 Lifted its flowers and made its green more green?
- "' 'Like wind ye go.' How are ye going hence?

 Where ye have passed do the fields bake with drouth?

Or have ye blown upon them like the south, And left them lovelier for your innocence?

"If ye have killed no flower ye need not fear;

If ye have nourished one, go forth content

To the great life—ye know why ye are sent:

Water and wind have done their errand here."

AT THE TREE.

Allegro giocondo: presto.

Round the old tree are twined
Garlands of posies.
Soft grows its rugged rind
'Neath its soft roses.
Here toil is knit and play,
Joy and sorrow,
Pansies for yesterday,
Laurels, to-morrow;
Love and hate, good and bad,
Foul and fair weather,
False and true, gay and sad,
Tangled together.

Though the great struggle be
Fierce when it closes,
Yet I'll tear from the tree
Some of its roses.
These in thy lap I'll fling
In fragrant rain, love,
Bidding them only bring
Joy, without pain, love.

IN THE GYMNASIUM.

Tempo di Valse: allegro.

I REMEMBER threading my way,
Like a shuttle along a loom,
Through a vast dissolving throng;
I remember a dense perfume
Of pines, and roses in bloom;

I remember a blaze of light,
I remember a lofty hall,
I remember a murmur of tongues
Like the tune of a water-fall—
But as if I had dreamed it all:

For I only knew, that night,

That my arm was holding her fast,

That my eyes were looking in hers,

And, for all the crowd that swept past,

That we were alone at last!

UNDER THE ELMS.

Nocturne: adagio.

"Say, love, if we be not in Paradise?
You is no leafy roof above our heads,
But a cloud-bridge of the great infinite;
Those myriad, swaying, twinkling lamps were stars
If seen from earth by mortals; and these paths

Stray endlessly to pleasure, woven around Through this soul's garden, fairest spot of all; Those that flit by us, laughing soft, in white, Are spirits, like ourselves blest beyond hoping; (Without the brazen gates the hopeless cry;) From some far sun, list to the angels singing! Answer me, love, is not this Paradise?"

"Love, where thou art is always Paradise." [Lampoon, xvii, 10. 1889.]

OTHER VERSES.

ODE

ON THE 250TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE FOUNDATION OF HARVARD COLLEGE.

(Recited in Sanders Theatre, Nov. 6, 1886.)

MOTHER, peerless, immortal, our lips but repeat The words so oft spoken before,

As we timidly, rev'rently, kneel at thy feet And ask for thy blessing once more.

Our fathers rejoiced at thy dawn overcast;

We exult in thy radiant day;

So, our sons and their sons, when our glories are past And our names as forgotten as they:

For though mountain and river should part thee for aye From the child thou hast reared at thy knee,

The niche that he keeps in his heart is too high.

To be filled by another than thee.

The centuries fade, like a mist from the glass; We are gone,—why we know not, nor where;

Yet as ever we wearily halt as we pass, We behold thee, still young and still fair.

[Advocate, xlii, 4. 1886. New Verses from the Harvard Advocate, p. 3. 1887. Commemoration Volume of the Anniversary, p. 145. 1887.]

CHLORIS.

(Adapted from Béranger's "Glycère.") THE OLD MAN.

You happy, smiling girl, what brings you here To this remote and unfrequented place?

THE GIRL.

I pluck the fragrant wild-flowers that uprear Their graceful heads above the tangled grass. For all the lads and lasses go to-day, Soon after sunset, to the village green, To honor all the ancient rites of May And to elect the fairest maiden queen. These wild hedge-roses must adorn my hair, An old and dangerous rival to outshine: Chloris, a shepherdess, whose beauty rare Hath, unadorned, charms far surpassing mine.

THE OLD MAN.

Knowest thou well this dark and lonesome spot?

THE GIRL.

No. Everything is new and strange to me.

THE OLD MAN.

Worshipped a week ago, but now forgot, Chloris sleeps 'neath you spreading linden tree. Red briar-roses climb about her head. And at her feet the yellow cowslips bloom; And these, by some mysterious impulse led To rival her, you pluck upon her tomb.

[Advocate, xxxix, 3. 1885.]

SOUVENIRS.

LIKE misers, our usurious memories bring Their coins each day to greedy reckoning,— Grieved if they miss one as they count their store Or find one brass, long-loved as gold before.

[Century Magazine, September, 1890.—Written, 1888.]

THE DELIGHT OF LIVING.

Prove that my mind dies when my body dies,

That I do not possess an immortal soul
Save in desire; prove that the utmost goal
For kings or beggars is the grave; and, lies
Of cunning priests, or poets' fantasies,

The future life and the divine control;
Spare not one kind delusion to console
For failing senses and fast-dimming eyes:
Nay, even, like old Crusoe bid me spend
My little hour, at the world's farthest end,
Mute as my fellow-brutes in that sad place,

And then 'twere sweet to live, so weak a thing,
To breathe, if nothing more, the fire of Spring,
Or feel the Winter beat against my face!

[1889.]

TWO ANSWERS

TO "WHY I READ HERRICK."

I read my Herrick first of all When Nature grows tyrannical.

"'TIS Winter," says the Almanac:-The ponds are frozen; windows crack; On iron earth deep lies the snow, And rude tempestuous gales do blow. Outside my pane go stumbling by Chloris, Corinne and Lalage: Their dainty necks are wrapped in furs, Their slender hands are prisoners In sable muffs, and glossy seals Enwrap them close from head to heels; And yet they seem not all content Even in such soft environment. For Cora's face looks pinched and old, And Chloris' nose is red with cold: Keen winds are howling on their track.— "'Tis Winter," sighs the Almanac.

But what care I if Winter rage?

I turn the often-studied page,
And, in a moment, ice and snow,
Seem empty things of long ago;
While mossy banks with violets growing,
Like stars through cloudlets dimly glowing,

And harebells in the heather tangled,
And meadows marguerite-bespangled,
And rippling brooks and water-cresses,
May Queens and buxom shepherdesses,
Soft winds in fragrant forests dying,
And ravens through the oak-wood flying,
And throstles singing in the trees
Of the far-famed Hesperides,
Are mine once more; and ice and snow
Seem empty things of long ago.

I read my Herrick first of all When Nature grows tyrannical.

I READ my Herrick oftenest
Since I love best what he loved best;
And as I know that every grace
Adorning Julia's tender face,—
The witching eyes, more eloquent
Than e'er was Peer in Parliament,
The flitting color of her cheek.
The lips, that do not seem to speak,
But, like the forest breeze of even,
To echo harmonies of Heaven;
Nay, that the very smallest things,
Her zone, her hand, her finger-rings,
The voice, the laugh that I have prized,

By him have been immortalized,— Since he sings best what I love best, Of all I read him oftenest.

[Advocate, xlii, 8, 10. 1887.]

LAMPY.

(Written in a Volume of the Lampoon.)

HERE the calm Jester's satire keen
Scatters the fools and stings the mean.
The true and manly, unalarmed
At his frank jesting, pass unharmed:
But to the blackguard crowd that laugh
At once is death—and epitaph!

[1891.]

A LETTER

Acknowledging the gift of a brass Arab inkstand.

DEAR PHYLLIS: I begin to use Your gift by calling down the Muse, Who should be so content to sing Near such a Heliconian spring,

That henceforth through my pen instead Of pallid phantoms, Saxon-bred, From the black pool within the brass Unusual Eastern shades shall pass: Egyptians—Arabs—Bedouins— Buff robes-buff skirts and leopard skins; Mad Mahdis-madder Dervishes: A Dragoman with tasselled fez; White-turbaned, silent Moors; a Bey With great tall blacks from Nubia; Pashas—Viziers—the Sultan's might, Afar, veiled round from vulgar sight; Mamelukes—Muezzins—Minarets: White cities, where the slow sun sets. Leaving black shadows on the sand; Thick night—and, stealing to the street From Haroun's palace, strangely sweet, Lutes, striking up the saraband!

Even from no Orient if it came,
My inky fount would be the same:
For it would still contain for me
Rich colors—lofty imagery—
A taste, just, delicate and true.
You see it once belonged to you!

ON PHYLLIS'S TWENTIETH BIRTHDAY.

But four times live your short life o'er,
And you shall see a century gone.
Poor Century! It shall count a score
Of its rare birthdays past, before
It knows another Paragon!

[Lampoon, xx, 7.][1891.]

MONTAUK POINT.

1. JULY.

- MOORLANDS, red and brown with the glowing heat of the summer,
 - Roll with gentle declivity down to the end of the land.
- Where the high, white cliffs, their scars all soft in the sunlight,
- Stand like the Ithacan crags—gay for Ulysses returned.
- Purple and green is the sea, like the swelling breast of a peacock,
 - Lover-like wooing the shore, scattering gifts at its feet—
- (Gems from its caverns of treasure)—flowers and shells iridescent,
 - Palely gleaming like stars (half-veiled by the clouds of foam).

- Soft as the sea is the sky, and a hazy and tremulous vapor
 - Dims the rich blue of its arch, where it dips down to the brink.
- Languid and sweet is the air—sweet with the grass of the moorlands—
 - Sweet with the breath of the ocean—sweet with the weeds on the shore.
- Cattle, in troops, on the uplands, indolent stray through the heather;
 - Gulls, all white in the sun, indolent wheel through the sky,
- Like feathers of foam tossed up by the sea to be worn by the heavens.
 - By day there is peace and by night: e'en when they seem to be wroth
- (The sky, the sea and the shore) why, then, 'tis only as lovers
 - Quarrel awhile in jest, that kissing may taste more sweet.
- Ever the ships sail east and west; and the shaft of the light-house
 - Seems the white pillar of old, marking the halcyon days.

II. DECEMBER.

- Moorlands, blackened and parched with the cold, or shrouded in snow-drifts,
- Roll with gentle declivity down to the verge as before, Where the gaunt, white cliffs now stand like crumbling ramparts,

- While, in its fury, the sea hurls itself up at their crests.
- Gray is the sea like a wolf its white fangs, cruel and foam-flecked;
 - Gray as the sea is the sky—hiding the sun from the earth.
- Gone are the herds from the uplands; gone are the birds of the summer—
 - Gone with the summer which brought them; gone are the sails from the sea.
- No longer the sea has aught of the girl or her passionate clamor,
 - But roars with sullen rage, like a she-wolf robbed of her whelps,
- Sending its sinuous surges forever ferociously landward— Flinging the scud to the wind, freezing wherever it falls.
- Ocean and sky show mercy to naught that lives: just as angels,
 - Sent with emotionless hearts on some stern errand of God,
- Slay both just and unjust, heeding nor prayer nor entreaty,
 - They, at the beck of the winter, spare neither beauty nor grace—
- Spare not even their victims. See! where they buffe and spurn it,
 - The upturned face of a human (still distorted with fright)

